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Paine, Robert Treat

Immediate and thorough  
organization of charities

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Robert Treat Paine

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## IMMEDIATE AND THOROUGH ORGANIZATION OF CHARITIES.

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The time has come when every Christian city must organize its charity to succeed. Success is a duty. It has become an imperative duty. The consequences of failure are too terrible. Pauperism has declared war upon Christianity, and means to win.

The questions for us tonight are: Can we meet the issue? How can we meet it? What means we must use to surely win and to make assurance doubly sure and take a bond of fate? Who will help? And first of all what is the need?

### PAUPERISM IS OUR WORST FOE.

It is a compound of crime, disease and despair. Criminals are punished by the law, and fill full our jails. Diseases call for doctors and hospitals. Despair renders well-nigh hopeless all efforts to help.

Paupers are fearfully prolific. Casting away all responsibility for offspring, they bring many children into life whose diseased bodies and brutal natures condemn them hopelessly to lives of degradation, of beggary, and of vice. The well-known story of the Juke family shows what a legion of paupers spring up in a few generations from a single pauper mother, costing, in jail and workhouse, over a million dollars already, with fearful promise for the future.

Where the spirit and habits of pauperism have grown fixed, especially where a second or third generation of paupers have grown up, full of all the instincts of pauper and vicious life, all remedy seems well-nigh impossible.\* The difficulty of the task is almost in proportion to the number of paupers who are aggregated

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\* Yet even of the Juke family, Dr. Harris says: "Debased as the stock became in the successive generations, I have reason to believe, that, in any of the generations, most of the individual members in it could have been rescued and saved from vice and offences by a prompt and reasonable care and training of the children."

into a mass, a group, a ward, a neighborhood. Take a single pauper family in a town by itself, and an earnest Christian man or woman can often, very often, find some way to get hold of them and help them or force them to get up. But where an army of such paupers are gathered together, it is almost impossible to lift any one family above the common low level. Hence come the appalling difficulties of the work among the poor of New York or of London.

Pauperism is then fearfully prolific, very costly, and, worse yet, it is contagious. It does not die out, but spreads rapidly. It is epidemic, and settles into low, unhealthy sections of cities, and poisons the neighborhood and the air of all life that is near to it.

Pauperism develops by rapid evolution a new type of being. Not wholly devoid of brain, they know enough to prey on the public. Too depraved to dislike their own degradation, they refuse to be lifted out of their slough.

Think of a single—the saddest—side of this pauper problem: the countless multitude of children, born in sin, bred in filth, debased in every thought and association, lost to all hope, content in their degradation. Child-life, which should be so pure and fresh, and full of joy! we can hardly measure, as we cannot deny, the debt we owe to the lives of children, whose parents society has allowed to sink neglected into vile decay.

Pauperism has been allowed to grow and gather headway too long. It is the most terrible problem which civilization presents. Not that Christians, who know that God is on their side, should give up the struggle or grow weary in the work, or faint in despair. Rather let us say that a full knowledge of the whole force of the foe can alone lead us to plan and execute measures equal to the need.

If, while wealth and art and culture and all the graces of civilization are filling the fairer parts of our cities, pauperism must of necessity grow apace, and is inevitable, we must bow our heads in shame and utter woe. But if the power of God is equal to the work of arresting its growth and finally wiping it away, let us hold our heads up in infinite hope, and, guided by wisdom from on high, and aided by a power mightier than our own, devote to the work all those human energies by which we can do our part to make the work successful.

## WHAT IS THE DUTY OF CHARITY?

Success is an instant and peremptory duty. Whatever methods of working among the poor are obstacles to complete success, should be given up in obedience to the higher law. The mere sentiment of charity is impotent and often harmful. "Infinite talk and no work" will not suffice. Nothing will do except

1. Thorough organization,
2. Bringing all workers among the poor into coöperation,
3. Studying the whole problem and all its needs,
4. Asking all the money needed for perfect machinery,
5. Asking a multitude of good men and women to help in the work,
6. Asking of a few men and women a supreme devotion,
7. Making sure that in every varying need and phase of depraved life, wise, prompt and effective measures are taken to ensure the best possible restoration,
8. Especially making sure that no children grow up paupers.

## ORGANIZATION OF CHARITY.

Organization is the great fact of our business life today. Railroads, telegraphs, factories, corporations of all kinds are admirably organized. They are daily studying to develop and perfect their organization. Charity must be wiser than they all. In small towns, needing no machinery, charity is as simple as it is lovely. In our large cities it has fought a guerrilla warfare against an unknown and almost infinite enemy. Today the fact stands patent to us all, that unorganized charity in large cities is terribly beaten. It is an utter failure. We have let its failure go on too long. The pyramid never can be lifted, if each worker insists on lifting alone, when and where he pleases. Only united effort can succeed. Look for a moment at

## DISORGANIZED CHARITY.

Take any hard case. The Church Visitor goes, investigates, learns a quarter of the truth, cannot decide what is best or how really to help, in despair he gives money and leaves; another Church Visitor does the same; the Overseer of the Poor does the same; the Visitor of the St. Vincent de Paul does the same; and so on through the list. A dozen agents have spent time enough in all

to have ferreted out the whole truth, and yet no one has got it. No one keeps the information, and it is lost. No one has devoted time enough to learn really the right thing to do, and so it has not been done. Most have been sympathetic and have given alms, probably more than enough to do the right thing, perhaps enough is actually doled out to debauch the recipient and all his children into alms-loving and permanent paupers.

Disorganized Charity has spent too much time, too much money, done no good, done infinite harm, and is a failure, or worse.

What does organized Charity do? Selects a single Visitor, gives him the whole case, charges him to get to the bottom of the facts, and to consult with a committee, and decides how just that particular family can be best helped to regain their own independence and self-respect, and spends whatever money is necessary to accomplish the result. It keeps ready for future use all it learns, and it asks every person and agency in the community to be its ally, and it succeeds.

The organization of Charity calls upon every relief-agency, every church, and every charitable person to help—not only to work for the poor, but to work in coöperation—to become parts of the great whole, which in Boston we call the

#### ASSOCIATED CHARITIES,

because ignoring none, and welcoming all, agencies as well as individuals, we think this name expresses the most beautiful idea of all coöperating together, retaining their separate rights and life, as *associated* charities.

The work in Boston, and in all other large cities, falls into two parts: registration, and work among the poor.

#### REGISTRATION.

The first thing done in Boston, and to be done anywhere, is to establish a system of registration; a *clearing house* of all relief given by all agencies and persons, and of all information collected by them.

The Registration Office, in Boston, is Room 41, Charity Building, Chardon street. It is in perfect working order. Its work is two-fold: gathering information and giving it.

*First.* It collects reports of all relief, and of all information,

by daily, weekly or monthly returns, and posts them upon cards kept in alphabetical order. The returns from each society or person are put on a separate card; and all the cards, varying from one to six, relating to one family, are fastened together by a hasp, which easily opens to admit a new card.

*Second.* The other branch of our work is even more important than the first, or rather it gives to the whole its chief value. The office mails to any society or person, who reports relief, or is asked to give relief to any case, a prompt reply—called a duplication—stating who else is relieving the same case, and what other relief is given. Each society and person, before relieving a person, is entitled to know, and ought to know, what other relief the family gets from other sources. So only can you find out fraud and stop excessive alms, and decide wisely on the kind and quantity of relief to continue. Sometimes too much relief is given, sometimes too little. The essence of the plan is to secure exact knowledge of the facts, and so to add to the judgment and joy of the gift.

This feature of our registration work is believed to be peculiar to Boston, and it well deserves the study of all other large cities. Few if any persons have failed to be convinced of the wisdom and helpfulness of this office, after reporting relief and receiving promptly back a full statement of all other relief to the same case. The number of private persons who register is rapidly increasing, as the advantages of the information they receive are becoming known and appreciated. Of course the number of those who do not register is still large, and a few societies still decline.

It is hoped they will soon see the advantages of the system, both to themselves and especially for the poor, and will aid to make it complete. The welfare of the whole needy class must be the controlling consideration.

Over 20,000 cards are now on file, all strictly secret, except for legitimate purposes of deciding about further relief or detecting imposture. The fear of publicity is of course unfounded.

Our rules are rigid that the cards are only used to detect imposture or to aid the family.

Even then you cannot see the card. The clerk gives you the desired information.

Every safeguard is adopted to protect the just shrinking of the poor from having their needs known.



Under these safeguards, the welfare of the whole needy population demands that registration shall be thorough and universal.

Even when you may not wish to register a family, you are welcome to inquire if they are registered already; and, if so, what relief they may have had. If you find them registered, you can then decide whether to register any relief you may have given.

What, now, is the practical use of registration?

Write to the Associated Charities, Charity Building, Chardon street, a statement of relief you give to any family, with the name and residence, or only making inquiry. You will receive back, within thirty-six hours, a letter, either telling you that the person is not registered as getting any other relief at all, or a "duplication," stating all the other relief, and what societies and persons give it, and what it is.

If no other relief is given, your pleasure in giving is enhanced by the assurance that what you alone give, is really wanted. If other relief is given, you may be amazed to learn the deception. In either event you can thereafter measure your relief with an exact knowledge of the facts.

Receive back a duplication of other relief and you can hardly help being at once a convert to our faith that registration *gives back* to each society and person who reports relief, tenfold more useful information than it receives; and that to go on giving relief to any family in ignorance of what other relief that same family gets elsewhere, is neither true charity to them nor wise for yourself.

During the year ending September 30th, 1880, 345 private persons and 44 societies have registered relief, 17 of which are churches. Of those who do not register, there remain only two large societies, — the St. Vincent de Paul and the Howard Benevolent. The Widows and Fatherless Society, aiding some 400 special cases, and also many smaller societies and numberless private persons do not as yet register. 7,716 cases were registered in the year to October 1, 1880, in which there are about 15,000 cards, estimated to be 4-5 of all the cases. On the average, two societies or persons reported on each case, and each case was reported nearly four times.

REGISTRATION AIMS TO ACCOMPLISH FOUR GREAT AIMS BY GATHERING UP A FULL AND TRUE RECORD OF EVERY FAMILY RECEIVING RELIEF.

- I. To aid every private person to give alms only to worthy poor, or rather to give *with knowledge*.
- II. To lessen the labors of relieving agencies, by giving to each the knowledge of others, and by preserving all information, which, as our two years' experience shows, grows rapidly in volume and value.
- III. To stop imposture, so that the occupation of living on alms may cease. Registration notifies every lazy tramp to quit, or go to work.
- IV. The main object is to make sure that relief is adapted to the real needs. This will lessen relief for the unworthy. But for the really worthy and most suffering poor *it should make relief more full and prompt and tender*.

## II. WORK AMONG THE POOR.

WHAT IS THE FULL MAGNITUDE AND MEASURE OF THE WORK THAT EVERY CIVILIZED CITY HAS GOT TO UNDERTAKE?

Seven thousand seven hundred and sixteen families registered last year as getting or asking alms! "The short and simple annals of the poor" are summed up into this little line. We count them and make a number, and put them into a statistic and tabulate them into a column, and how little it all is! A column, a line, a figure, a statistic. Expand all this to its vast reality.

Each one of the 7,716 cases reported is a human family, with human lives and cares and woes — some with old age in all its desolate and forgotten gloom; some with sickness, in all its varied forms of torture, sapping the blood, the hope, the means, the energies, the life of the sufferer, and perhaps of all other members of his home; most of them with children growing up to fill full to surfeit our so-called reformatories, our asylums and jails; children lost to every sense of childhood's purity and hope and joy; children swarming in cellars and attics and alleys, mingled with filth, bodies poisoned with disease, souls poisoned with sin, ignorant of any useful art or human hope; children exposed, not by Spartan cruelty to early, swift and simple death, but by more refined Christian cruelty to more protracted decay and far more varied death, or,

worse yet, to long lives of degradation, till the story grows so stale that we no longer listen.

How much of all the vast mass of suffering, of ignorance or degradation can be *prevented*, is the question of absorbing interest.

The difference between relieving agencies and the Associated Charities is this,—they aim at *relief*, we aim at *prevention*.

Let me cite one typical and sad case. An expert visitor bought a bag of flour for \$1.00, and took it to a family where six small children were crying for hunger. The mother said the father was looking for work, as a mason. He *was* round the corner loafing in a rum shop, and when he came home and found the flour he sold it for 90 cents, and spent the money for drink.

Relief alone will do no good, only aggravate the evil. Relief alone will train up those six children to beg and drink.

Society owes them a duty it cannot escape. Society tolerates the rum shop, which has ruined the father and the home. Society must save those children.

### THREE-FOLD MACHINERY FOR WORK AMONG THE POOR.

Boston has organized a system substantially coextensive with its limits. In each of fifteen districts a Conference has been formed, a large number of friendly Visitors are at work, and in nine of these districts permanent paid agents are employed.

#### I. THE CONFERENCE

is composed of all workers among the poor of the district. It meets every week or two, for a large part of the year. It chooses an Executive Committee of persons interested and, as far as possible, experienced in the work. Visitors report, usually in person, about their cases to the Conference, which consults and advises what action to take.

Visitors of churches and of relieving agencies are fast learning how helpful it is to compare notes about families, and to get advice what action is wise and how to secure it.

The art of really helping men, women and children, is not easy, it is very hard. It takes time and thought and study. It needs experience. It is well worthy of a weekly meeting of a few good men and women in each ward of one thousand needy persons in every city from this time forward forever.

Charity which claims to do its work by going out of an afternoon, seeing a family and relieving their needs at once, and sneering at organization and methods and deliberation, is a fraud, a sham, a failure in itself, and a snare to its victims. It is the great obstacle to God's work being done as God would have it done, by means wisely adapted to the vast and varied needs.

The Conference should know every agency of relief and every agent in its Ward. It should have in its box the card of information about every needy person in its Ward. It should make sure that the right visitor is sent as a friend to each and every one of all these families in need. This is a vast work, not yet done in any ward of Boston, but great progress has been made and it may not be too sanguine to think that in five years even this grand consummation may be attained.

## II. FRIENDLY VISITORS.

Friendly visitors may be called both the soul and the hands, as the Conference is the brains of our new work. Not that visitors need no brains; they need all they have both for the family they visit and to give to the counsels of the Conference, but they are especially the hands to do this divine work and certainly they are its life and soul and inspiration.

Without them, charity is dead, machinery is hard, and organization impotent for good.

It is not this society, it is not any society, which can itself do the work. Nothing will avail but the earnest coöperation of all good men and women, who know the need, and hear the cry, and are ready to respond, each devoting a little time and thought and love to helping up one or two of those who are down.

## NO PROSELYTISING.

What is the spirit of this new work? And first a caution. Proselytising is absolutely forbidden. Thus only can all faiths work together in the common cause of humanity. Not that religious teaching is forbidden. It is always wise to send to any family a visitor of their own faith who may then speak freely of religion, and especially make sure that children go to church and Sunday-school. No complaint on this score has come to my ear in Boston.

Nor can this rule limit the full measure of our visitors' work.

The faith which must fill and move them is common to all Christian creeds. Merely to feed mouths, or clothe backs, or fill stoves, or teach trades, or heal diseases, if this be all, is not enough, and will fail. Let us speak the truth in its infinite proportions. Visitors must take up this work in the same spirit which brought Christ among us. The work which he came to do, rests upon us to carry forward. The faith that God loves each one of us with the infinite tenderness of a Father's love, must inspire our workers, when their efforts flag and fail, with new inspiration and faithful constancy, and lead to final success.

In this spirit, organization cannot be cold or hard, or merely mechanical,—it has in it the spirit of life.

### III. THE HELP OF A TRAINED AGENT

is soon felt to be a necessity in this work of Volunteer Visitors among the poor. Prohibited from giving alms, the work of really improving the condition of a family is often very hard. Visitors ask in despair what they are to do, and how to accomplish it. Even when the object to aim at is clear, the way to bring it about is hard to find.

For every thousand families needing relief, one agent will always be wanted to give his whole time to the work of helping as many as he can to become independent.

The paid agents must become, if only after long study and patient practice and many failures, experts in the art of helping struggling families permanently upward, as well as experts in making a diagnosis of the causes of the need.

In some wards excellent results have been achieved without any paid agent, ladies and gentlemen not only acting as visitors, but dividing among themselves the especial duties of an agent, and doing them with devotion.

The office of each agent is in his district, and should be known to all citizens, especially those of the same district. These offices are open freely to all persons who wish to make any inquiry about any needy family. And we urge all persons to avail themselves of the services and help of our agents in any work for the good of the poor; and also especially to apply to our agents if they want any sort of work which the worthy poor can do.

With this three-fold organization of Conference, Friendly Visitors

and paid Agents in each district, what do they do for a family? As well ask what physicians do? Diagnosis first, and drugs afterward. There is no panacea for needs of the needy any more than for diseases of the body.

The multitude of ills that flesh is heir to makes a long and sad catalogue. Look only at a few of them. Think as to each in turn what a wise and friendly and devoted visitor can do, and with what good results!

- I. HEALTH.—1. A sick person can often be put in the way of cure.
2. Surgical treatment will often restore a man to work.
- II. HOME.—3. Aid a poor family to move out of a damp cellar into sunny rooms,
4. Out of dens of disease into healthier quarters,
5. Out of abodes of vice into purer streets,
6. Perhaps from city into country,
7. Perhaps out West.
- III. WORK.—8. Aid a man to find or advise him where to seek it.
9. Aid a woman to find or advise her where to seek it.
10. Especially do this for the boys and girls when old enough to work.
11. Perhaps see that the girl or the mother goes to service.
12. Aid a mother with only one child to find a place for service in the country.
13. Aid a widow with children to support them by finding other children to take in and board.
14. A multitude of ways of aiding persons to find work can be found by long experience.
- IV. SKILL.—15. Aid to a woman to learn how to sew,
- 16, or to be a laundress,
- 17, or to scrub and clean paint,
- 18, or to learn to be a hair dresser,
- 19, or a corn doctor,
- 20, A hundred useful arts exist which being taught to them, enable men, women or children to earn their own support.

- V. SETTING UP IN TRADE.—21. Even in a small way, it is easily done. This is very helpful.
- VI. ECONOMY.—22. Often much good can be done by showing a family how to economize and live on what they have: thus, by moving them from a \$10 into a \$4 tenement.
- VII. TEMPERANCE.—23. The power of a Visitor over persons prone to intemperance is often unexpected and very great.
- VIII. CHEER.—24. In a multitude of cases families are broken down with discouragement, and need only the cheer and inspiration of a friend to rise up and walk.
- IX. THRIFT.—25. A wise Visitor can often be of vast use by teaching thrift, and, when earnings begin, making the family save and start a savings-bank book, which is often a turning point in life.
- X. CHILDREN. 26. No words can tell the value of a true friend to a family of young children among our needy poor, teaching them neatness, virtue and self-respect, and training them into good citizens and good men and women. Save the children.

In all of these ways our workers in Boston have already achieved success, and in many others too numerous to describe. A thorough system of study needs to be inaugurated to make our work effectual. The powerful influence to lift up a family into a new life is the best of the whole work.

#### THE AIM OF THE ASSOCIATED CHARITIES.

*"Wherever any family has fallen so low as to need relief, send to them at least one friend—a patient, true, sympathizing, firm friend—to do for them all that a friend can do to discover and remove the causes of their dependence, and to help them up into independent self-support and self-respect."*

#### THE GRAND RESULTS OF THIS WORK OF FRIENDLY VISITORS AMONG THE POOR.

*"The experience of two years' work of our Associated Charities justifies us in calling attention to this fact, or rather this great discovery, that a gentleman or lady will, in a surprising proportion of*

*cases, discern means to help a family into independence, if he or she goes into their homes and learns the whole truth, what the various members of the family can do or can be made to do; going there not only not to give alms, but prohibited from doing so, and therefore forced to study how to aid the family towards self-support."*

It is idle to enumerate the causes which can be removed by the counsel, the cheer, the encouragement, the sympathy, the brains, of a gentleman or lady full of the strength and joy of life.

No one will believe it till he tries, or doubt it when he has tried.

Five typical cases will show the value of visitors' work in as many different kinds of needy circumstances.

1. A widow was left on Lincoln street with five young children. She got coal from the city, groceries from the Provident, sewing from Trinity Society, and other aid from two or three friends. While the children were young, perhaps she got none too much to keep her family together. But the children had grown old enough for the boy and girl to begin to work and to help support. Two paths open before that family. Let relief from these many sources go on too long, and the children see supplies flow in unearned, and there is danger lest they learn to live on alms and are made paupers. A friendly visitor made sure that the boy and girl went to work at the right age, and soon the family could live on their own means, without alms, and the family was independent.

2. A widow and six children on North street are all beggars in the street, and, as they can do no work well, find so little to do that in their demoralized state they hardly think of seeking any, content to live on what they can get by beggary. A visitor takes the eldest boy into his store at \$2 a week, making a place for him, and watching and teaching him; finds a place for the oldest girl in a family at seventy-five cents a week and board; also, a place for the second girl where she can earn her board. He sends the mother to the sewing-rooms of Ward VI., where she is taught to sew, and earns fifty cents weekly, and is helped to find regular sewing at one dollar a week in addition; all, however, on condition that the whole family stop begging.

Three months pass by, and the visitor found the family one Saturday evening counting up their joint earnings and in counsel how to use them. The whole family had been raised out of beggary into independence and conscious self-respect.

The alms of all the relieving societies in the world would not



only have been impotent, but would' probably have confirmed the family as paupers.

3. Another case finds an aged father and mother able to earn but little, and dependent upon the support of a son thirty-six years old, who had earned till recently twelve dollars a week, but is now prevented from working by chronic ulcer of his leg. Hopelessness has settled over all, and the Overseers of the Poor give such relief as may piece out scanty earnings. The visitor sent the son to the hospital for treatment, where, after daily attendance for a fortnight, he was so well, though not wholly cured, that he found work at ten dollars a week, and the family again became self-supporting.

4. A mother sees the world so full of gloom that to hide the sufferings of her half-starved children she seeks oblivion in drink. Punishment, imprisonment, will not cure the mother nor help the children. The cheer of a loving visitor, work to do, sympathy, encouragement, may perhaps rescue the mother from discouragement and the demon of drink, and plant her on firm land, to the unspeakable blessing of her children, and the saving of herself.

5. Another woman has seen better days, but now in her distress knows no trade by which to support herself and her children. A friendly visitor, who, under our rules, can give no money or its equivalent without the sanction of the Conference, pays the sum needed for her to learn the trade of a hair-dresser, by which she can now easily support herself and family.

Cases might be indefinitely multiplied; but these are enough to illustrate in how many ways a friendly visitor can help a struggling family into a better life.

#### A FRIEND.

These are details. The one supreme want of the needy, almost always, is a friend. God forbid that any of you here are ignorant of the infinite joy of a friend. I know not what part of the sad lot of the friendless poor is so sad as to be without a friend. Go to them simply as a friend. Make them gradually feel that at least one person in the world cares very much for them, and you get a hold on them, not only full of joy but potent for good.

Love is the great power in this world. Love will move men to acts of supreme devotion and heroic valor. Love fills the lives of women full of never ending sacrifice. Love has brought heaven

down to earth, and can raise earth up to heaven. Love is the power by which our new charity must work and will succeed. Sometimes forbidden to give to the needy what will hurt them, sometimes in doubt what form of relief will really help, take always a full measure of the love which brought Christ down to us, and by which we can hope to bring them to him.

#### NOT ALMS BUT A FRIEND,

is the motto of the Associated Charities of Boston, and must be the spirit of the new charity everywhere.

Do not think the Associated Charities do, or try to do, or mean to do, all the charity work of the city. Far from it. Rather to learn all the agencies, and to make them known to all (as by our Directory of Charities), so that each agency may do its own peculiar work in its own best way. A wonderful economy of agencies is thus effected, and each, devoting itself to fewer cases, can be thorough in them.

You may be surprised to hear that our visitors are forbidden — on their own impulse — to give any relief to any family they visit. They must report to the Conference and act under deliberate vote, except in those rare cases of immediate and urgent need which overrule all law. This rule, which seemed harsh at first, commends itself daily more and more to our experience.

The reasons for this rule are too long here to dwell on. Miss Octavia Hill has taught us the reasons out of her wisdom and proved them by a life-work which will make her name immortal among those who help and love the poor.

To stop street begging and street giving Boston provides a Temporary Home, always open, for women and children, and a Wayfarers' Lodge where bed and food and bath are always ready for men, to be paid by a stent of wood-sawing in the morning.

Our sixteen truant officers are doing invaluable work among the children, not only keeping them at school, but watching them, knowing their homes and parents, and exerting a constant influence, rescuing neglected children from homes of vice.

Drink is the worst enemy in all this work to raise the poor. Drink is the ruin of the poor, and the source of almost all their woes. How to fight it best, we must think and work.

Alms are not the whole of charity.

“Charity must do four things,—

- I. Relieve worthy need promptly, fittingly, and tenderly.
- II. Prevent unwise alms to the unworthy.
- III. Raise into independence every needy person, where this is possible.
- IV. Make sure that no children grow up to be paupers.

Relief, detection, elevation, and prevention are all essential parts of a complete system.”

Look backwards at the growth of pauperism, and despair fills the soul, overwhelmed with gloom at the thought that we are on the side of the *lost cause*, in which case we may as well give it all up, and betake ourselves each to our own feasting-table, and bid our souls be merry while we may! But, if we believe that God made this world and means to have it, and wants us to help, then we will look, not backwards, but forwards, and gird up our loins with joy, and give to the winning side our time and thought and work and money, to make success assured.

What a proud privilege it is to live in these days, when all over the Anglo-Saxon world civilization is rousing itself into resolute war with every form of degraded life. The great cities of England and of the United States, one after another, are wheeling into line, and organizing their charities, on thorough scientific basis, to do thorough and successful work.

Eyes must be blind and ears be deaf which do not see and hear the mighty movement of this century to help up those who are trodden down. Surely the air is full of the sweet music of the union of all mankind in a common brotherhood.

Every city must have:

1. Complete organization; so that charity may know what is wise to do, and be able to do what is wise, for every family in need, in all their infinite variety.

2. Competent paid agents in every district of a thousand needy families, devoting their whole time to the work of helping up those who are down, and guiding the efforts of volunteer workers among the poor.

3. Money enough to carry on this work in full vigor; a large, very large part of it being expended for machinery, chiefly agents, just as in the school system almost the whole money goes for

teachers, and none to the taught. No money I have given in charity these last two years seems to me to have done so much good to the poor as what I have paid to our agent in the Ward where I live.

4. A multitude of men and women, who feel the duty of establishing right relations between the rich and the poor, and wish to do their part.

#### DO YOU ASK WHAT YOU CAN DO?

Pardon me if I point my moral home. I wonder if any of you ladies or gentlemen have not some family, connected with you in some of the relations of life, not today independent, but receiving relief. You may have been ready to give relief and to give it kindly, and may have thought of nothing more.

Tomorrow devote ten minutes to thought how you can help that one family to become independent. Visit their home. Know the children and their sex and ages. Learn what they each can do or cannot do, and yet ought to do and can be taught to do:—what wages; what employer; what occupation. See if occupation and earnings cannot be improved. Especially look after the children. See that they go to school till of the age to work, and then you can often be of more use than you imagine in advising and insisting that they go to work, and helping to find it. If the man is idle, see what he can do, and find him work, or, better still, advise *him* where to seek it. If the woman is idle, find work for her, or, better still, advise *her* where to find it, and befriend her in getting it. If you are a visitor of any society with fifty families to look after, you not only cannot do this, but you never even think of it. But if you have your one family to befriend, the chances are that within a month or two, or a year or two, you can have that one family earning its own support, or at any rate roused and raised into a better life.

The new charity asks, of each and all, allegiance to the cause; do not let prejudices stand in the way of thorough work on a system designed to succeed! Let the welfare of the poor, of the great and growing legion of the needy, be the governing and sole consideration. If you refuse to coöperate, if your church refuses, others will follow, and thorough work be impossible and the war be left to be a guerilla fight, certain to fail. The new charity asks of each and all a little time and thought and money and aid. Did I

say, a little? I meant, a great deal. Enough to make assurance sure.

I have failed utterly in what I have tried to say if I have not made some of you feel deeply that this work, now before it is too late, calls in tones, not quite broken with despair, but tinged with immortal hope, not for a fragment of your time nor for a portion of your money, but for you, yourselves; you, in a supreme devotion to an infinite need; you, not for an hour or day, but for all the rest of life; some of you, business men, who have guided great affairs to fortune, to put into the guidance of charity the same sagacity and energy and indomitable will;—some of you, women who have made homes radiant with joy, to fill this work full of the same patience and tenderness and love; all of us praying, with Solomon, for wisdom that we may guide our work aright; ready, with Paul, to ask, Lord, what will Thou have us to do; and as the thought grows strong that we are to have this life on earth only once, eager to make the best use of it before it is too late. What use of it can, on the whole, compare with devoting it to making the world around us brighter, happier and purer?

#### IN CONCLUSION,

This is the one thought I ask you to carry home. The Associated Charities, Organized Charity, mean not mere machinery or organization or agencies or anything else, except this:

To every one in need, a friend;—

No gaps, even in great cities; we must be sure no one is neglected;—

To these friends, legion though they are, instruction to each what is really best to do for his needy family, and aid him to do it.

Thorough organization and devoted work to make sure that to each person in need a friend goes, seeking to do, instructed to do, and aided to do, exactly what is best for that particular needy person, for permanent cure.

ROBERT TREAT PAINE, Jr.,

*President of the Associated Charities of Boston.*

March 31, 1881.

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TITLE**